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step into

ACCESSORIES

for a
total look

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STEP INTO ACCESSORIES FOR A TOTAL LOOK

Becky Culp*

A collection of the little things — accessories — add sparkle to appearance.

Accessories are vital to wardrobes because they add versatility, satisfying individual needs for day-to-day change. They provide opportunities for creativity, individuality and an expression of personality. They can update last season's costume in an inexpensive way, thus expanding the clothing budget. Accessories make clothing more becoming by emphasizing good features and drawing attention from less attractive ones.

Today's lifestyles have altered clothing habits by relaxing and eliminating many rules regarding appropriate dress. As a result, many different clothes and accessories are suitable for the same activity.

Accessories were once considered basic additions to clothing. For example, a woman always wore a strand of pearls with a black dress, and a man always wore a tie pin to hold his tie in place. Today emphasis is placed on the total effect of the complete ensemble, rather than considering each accessory individually as shoes, jewelry, hats. Cosmetics and hair styles are other important accessory items that can enhance the total look.

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Becomingness

Fashion is a form of art. Principles of design which act as guidelines for achieving a pleasing fashion picture have evolved through time.

In creating a total picture, each accessory either reinforces or weakens the effect of all the parts.

Observe the effect of accessories on you and your clothes in a full-length mirror. Switch, move and experiment for the best effect. Fashion no longer requires that individual accessories match each other as a set. Experiment with multiples, such as two or more necklaces or scarves.

Strong contrasts of line, color, texture, size and shape will add variety and interest. Close relationships and little contrast will create unity. A major focal point for a pleasing appearance is needed and may either occur in the garments or in accessories selected.

If in doubt about adding or omitting a certain accessory, omit it. Simplicity is smarter than a cluttered look.

Line

Accessories should enhance the major structural lines of a garment. Repetition of line creates movement. For example, repetition created by a waistline belt and a horizontal yoke ties a costume together.

Drawing the glance to the side of the figure increases the apparent width of the part to which attention is directed. For example, placing a pin or flower at the side of the waistline broadens the waistline.

Lengthwise and crosswise lines add length or width to the area where they are located. The crosswise placement of round earrings add width to the face; ankle strap shoes add width to the ankle; and wide belts add width to the waistline, also emphasizing the hip line.

Accessories can be adapted to create an illusion of length or width. A turned down hat brim, for example, adds width to a long thin face while a turned up brim or a hat tilted back on the head, lengthens the face.

Likewise a scarf or beads add length when worn in a long narrow V or strand. A scarf tied in a soft bow at the neckline without long ends and choker beads adds width and minimizes length.



Size and Shape

The size of accessories should be in proportion to the size of the individual and other accessories. For example, a petite figure is overpowered by a large handbag. Likewise, a small handbag makes a large figure appear larger. Tall figures can successfully wear more and larger accessories than petite figures.

A distinct difference in the shape of an accessory can make an article appear completely unrelated to the costume. With a tailored suit cut on boxy lines, the shape of a rectangular bag would be pleasing.

Rounded filled-in shapes add more bulk than do those which are slender and open. For example, button type earrings add width to a long face while dangling pendants add length to a round face. Wedge heel shoes generally create heavier looking feet and legs than do slender heels.

Texture

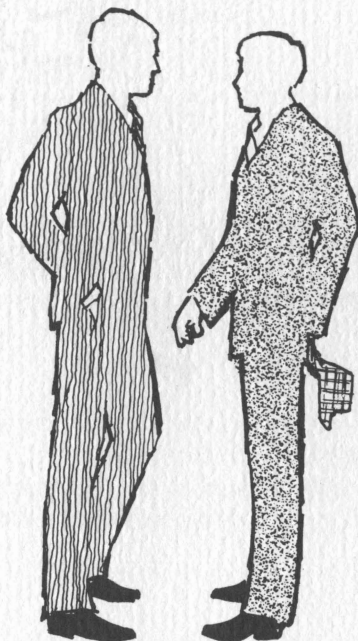
Texture, the way accessories look, feel and handle, affects the overall look. Hair and skin are two textured accessories that should be considered as either may become the focal point. Bulky and stiff textured accessories add width. Shiny textured accessories create more emphasis and appear larger than dull-textured accessories; polished jewelry attracts more attention than dull or rough-textured jewelry.



Color

Color as an element of design is usually the first noticed. The total effect of colored accessories depends not only on the colors chosen, but also on the proportion in which each occurs and is placed.

Brightly colored accessories are more pleasing if they are concentrated near the face, or at least high enough on the figure and far enough from the edge to achieve a balanced placement. In men's costume, the center of emphasis usually occurs near the face due to colorful shirts, ties and hats.



Bright, contrasting colored accessories direct attention to the area where they are located. This is apparent by contrasting colored hose or socks and shoes emphasizing the feet. Brightly colored nail polish accents well groomed fingers and toes. Where do you want the attention drawn?

Accessories of a color that contrasts with the total look can result in a spotty effect. The total look will be more pleasing if accessories are used as a link between areas of greatest contrast. For example, the pattern in a tie may pick up the colors of the suit and shirt to increase the relatedness.

One splash of color is generally more pleasing than several splashes which compete for a center of interest.



Buying Accessories

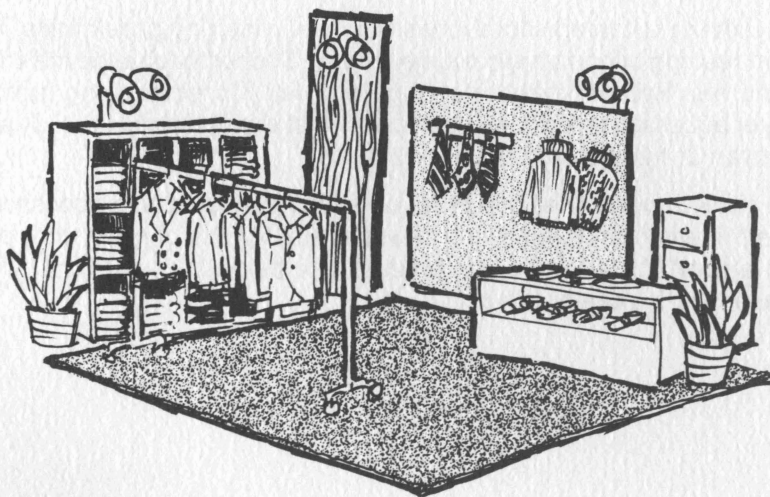
Accessories are very sensitive to fashion, often changing from season to season. Time spent in studying accessory fashion trends in relation to your wardrobe, personal preferences and needs, pays off. If in doubt about a certain purchase, it is wiser to shop further.

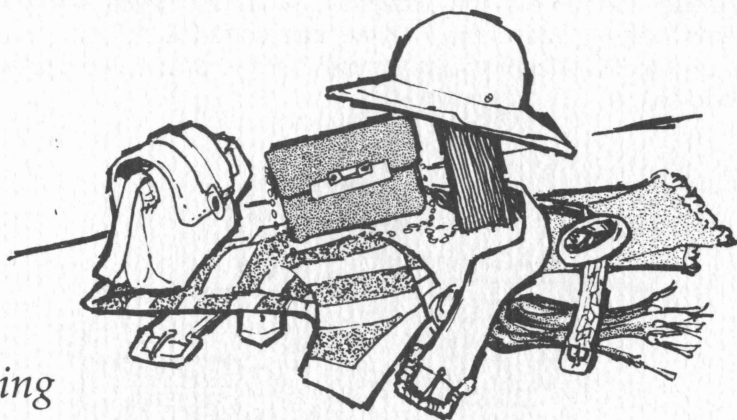
Shop with a plan of what you need. If necessary, arm yourself with fabric swatches of hard to coordinate colors or textures, measurements and other descriptions. Avoid buying accessories of limited use. This is often a temptation with accessories which are individually less expensive than other items of clothing. With the exception of shoes, accessory items do not require fitting and size alteration. Frequently an article is seen, liked, bought and often worn immediately. Many times impulse buying is

the case, rather than the exception to the rule. Notice where accessory items are situated in store — at the main entrance, adjacent to traffic isles or in conjunction with major apparel items to coordinate a total look from head to toe.



The average woman spends approximately one-third of her clothing dollar on shoes, hosiery, handbags, millinery and other accessory items. It's the little things that add up — \$10 here, \$5 there. Don't be guilty of spending a majority of the budget for eye-catching but unneeded accessories.





Updating Your Wardrobe

Fashionable accessories can update your wardrobe. Old favorites take on a new look when accessories are changed or new ones added.

Garments that are not obviously outdated, that fit and need a lift are possibilities for updating with accessories. Study each garment in relation to current fashion trends for ideas. Decide if existing accessories can be effectively used or if new ones will need to be made or purchased.

Existing outdated accessories may have recycling possibilities. Take apart, restring or combine costume jewelry. Shorten or change the shape of scarves. Recover belts or change buckles. Consider dying fabric or leather accessories a darker color or add hand painted designs. Change the strap or handle on a purse or bag.

Think through possibilities for updating garments with accessories. Collect ideas from magazines, newspapers, friends or while shopping. Add a scarf, collar and cuffs, jewelry, or a belt. Layer over or under a blouse, scarf, sweater or vest.

Accessory Survey:

Becoming accessories:

Needed accessories:

Garments with updating possibilities:

Accessories needing recycling:

Other ideas:



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